



Sunday, February 9, 2020, 7pm
Zellerbach Hall

— MYRA MELFORD JAZZ PLATFORM —

An Evening of Jazz Duos Onstage

PROGRAM

Ingrid Laubrock, *saxophone*
Kris Davis, *piano*

INTERMISSION

Tim Berne, *saxophone*
Matt Mitchell, *piano*

Cal Performances' 2019–20 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.



It is my great pleasure to welcome to the stage of Zellerbach Hall these two stellar duos, comprised of piano and saxophone, and representing the pinnacle of creative improvised music coming out of New York City today. Each of these musicians as performer/composers, individually, and in ensemble, are at the forefront of shaping the direction and diversity of jazz improvisation in the 21st century.

Pianist Kris Davis and saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock have been performing together since 2008, when they formed the trio Paradoxical Frog with drummer/composer Tyshawn Sorey. They have continued to deepen their musical relationship through performing in each other's ensemble projects, and have recently made a duo recording of original compositions, contributed by each of them, which will come out on the Swiss label, Intakt, this spring. These pieces, performed with consummate expressivity and virtuosity, combine both pre-composed and improvised material in seamless and imaginative new ways.

Saxophonist Tim Berne and pianist Matt Mitchell have been collaborating since the late 1990s, and the fluidity and kinship in their rapport is palpable, as evidenced on their 2018 release, *Angel Dusk*, on Screwgun Records. Tim has been at the vanguard of the Downtown Experimental and Creative Music scenes in New York City since the 1980s. He has been an important source of inspiration for younger generations of musicians, including Matt Mitchell, who has been performing Tim's music now for many years, more recently as a member of Tim's band Snakeoil, and through solo and duo performances. They're both prolific composers and improvisers, making endlessly inventive, evocative music.

We're so fortunate to hear all four of these musicians up-close, in an intimate setting that further enhances the immediacy and affinity of their long-standing dialogues.

—Myra Melford

Ingrid Laubrock is a saxophonist/composer based in Brooklyn since 2009. Laubrock is interested in exploring the borders between musical realms and creating multi-layered, dense, and often evocative sound worlds. Her main projects as a leader are Anti-House, Serpentes, and the Ingrid Laubrock Sextet. She has also performed with Anthony Braxton, Muhal Richard Abrams, Jason Moran, Kris Davis, Tyshawn Sorey, Mary Halvorson, Tom Rainey, Tim Berne, Dave Douglas, among many others.

She is a prolific composer who has written for ensembles ranging from duo to chamber orchestra. Awards include the Fellowship in Jazz Composition from the Arts Foundation in 2006, the 2009 SWR German Radio Jazz Prize, and the 2014 German Record Critics Quarterly Award. Laubrock won best Rising Star Soprano Saxophonist in the 2015 *Downbeat* Annual Critics Poll and Best Tenor Saxophonist in 2018. She is one of the recipients of the 2019 Herb Alpert Ragdale Prize in Music Composition and has received composing commissions from the Shifting Foundation, the Jerwood Foundation, American Composers Orchestra, Tricentric Foundation, SWR New Jazz Meeting, and the Jazz Gallery Commissioning Series.

Pianist-composer **Kris Davis** was named 2017 Rising Star Pianist/2018 Rising Star Artist in *Downbeat* magazine and dubbed one of the music's top "up-and-comers" in a 2012 *New York Times* ("New Pilots at the Keyboard"), with the newspaper saying: "One method for deciding where to hear jazz on a given night has been to track down the pianist Kris Davis." To date, Davis has released 12 recordings as leader. Her newest release, *Diatom Ribbons*, was named top jazz album of 2019 by the *New York Times*, NPR, *Rolling Stone*, *Pop Matters*, *Downbeat*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Jazz Times*. Along with Ingrid Laubrock, Davis works as a collaborator and side person with artists such as John Zorn, Terri Lyne Carrington, Craig Taborn, Tyshawn Sorey, Eric Revis, Michael Formanek, Tony Malaby, Ingrid Laubrock, Julian Lage, Mary Halvorson and Tom Rainey. She has received a Doris Duke Impact Award (2015) and multiple commissions to compose new works from the Shifting Foundation, the Jazz Gallery/Jerome Foundation, and the Canada Council for the Arts. Davis is Associate Program Director of Creative Development for the Berklee Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice.

Tim Berne is a composer, saxophonist, and educator specializing in improvised music. He has been performing internationally since 1982 with ensembles including Caos Totale, Fractured Fairy Tales, Bloodcount, and Snakeoil.

Berne has made over 50 recordings as a leader for labels such as Soul Note, Sony, JMT, and (currently) ECM records. In 1996, he started his own label, Screwgun Records, with which he most recently released is *Angel Dusk* with Matt Mitchell. Additionally, he has taught extensively since the late 1990s, giving workshops in the US, South America, and Europe.

Recent awards and residencies include: New York State Council on the Arts; New York State Foundation for the Arts; Readers Digest/

Meet the Composer (for work with Kronos Quartet and the Rova Saxophone Quartet); the McDowell Colony; the Djerassi Foundation; and Civitella Ranieri.

He is currently active with his group Snakeoil and with Sun of Goldfinger.

Matt Mitchell is a pianist and composer interested in the intersections of various strains of acoustic, electric, composed, and improvised new music. Described as "hyper-articulate" and "a pianist of burrowing focus and an indispensable fixture of the contemporary vanguard" (*The New York Times*), he currently composes for and leads several ensembles featuring many of today's foremost musicians and improvisers, artists including Tim Berne, Kim Cass, Caroleine Davis, Kate Gentile, Ben Gerstein, Sylvaine H elary, Jon Irabagon, Travis Laplante, Ava Mendoza, Miles Okazaki, Ches Smith, Chris Speed, Tyshawn Sorey, Chris Tordini, Anna Webber, Dan Weiss, and Katie Young.

Mitchell is an anchor member of several significant creative music ensembles that integrate composed and improvised music, including Tim Berne's Snakeoil, the Dave Douglas Quintet, the John Hollenbeck Large Ensemble, Rudresh Mahanthappa's Bird Calls, Jonathan Finlayson's Sicilian Defense, the Dave Binney Quartet, the Dan Weiss Large Ensemble, Steve Coleman's Natal Eclipse, Kate Gentile's Mannequins, Mario Pavone's Blue Dialect Trio, Anna Webber's Simple Trio, Ches Smith's We All Break, Michael Attias' Spun Tree, and Quinsin Nachoff's Flux. He is also among the core performers of John Zorn's Bagatelles.

He has taught extensively with the Brooklyn-based School for Improvisational Music, as well as at the New School, NYU, and the Siena Jazz Workshop. Mitchell is also a 2015 recipient of a Doris Duke Impact Award and a 2012 recipient of a Pew Fellowship from the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage.